PATTERNS
OF
POWER

The Man Who Holds the City

1453, the Patriarchate, and the Conqueror Who Needed No Warrant

1453 — 1454 — 1923

Thomas J. Bryan
with Claude (Anthropic)

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Held as tested, not revealed.
A case study in the Patterns of Power series.

Primary sources quoted exactly; modern scholarship paraphrased and credited.
Contested figures given as ranges. Nothing reconstructed from memory.

CONTENTS

Preface
PREFACE AND OUTLINE

Landscape
A CONQUEROR WHO NEEDED NOTHING

Module 1
TWENTY-FOUR MILES OF LAND WALL

Module 2
ASSUME THE CHAIR

Module 3
HE DID NOT NEED THE BLESSING

Module 4
THE ANATHEMAS WERE STILL READ

Module 5
THE CHEAPEST HOLD IN THE COLLECTION

Module 6
THE PATRIARCH COLLECTED IT

Module 7
A GREEK WRITING FOR THE SULTAN

Module 8
THE SULTAN APPOINTED HIM

Module 9
THE MOUNTAIN KEPT ITS CHARTERS

Module 10
THE OFFICE BECAME A COMMODITY

Module 11
WHAT ENDED AND WHAT DID NOT

Module 12
THE END OF ROME

PREFACE AND OUTLINE

Front matter · how this study was made, the disciplines it holds itself to, and a map of its fourteen parts

The collaboration

This is a case study in the Patterns of Power series and it closes an arc. It applies the series' framework to the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople and the settlement that followed — from the siege of April and May 1453, through the installation of Gennadios II Scholarios as patriarch in January 1454, to the arrangement that governed the Orthodox church for four hundred and sixty-nine years and the nineteenth-century forces that dissolved it.

The study was built one module at a time. The author brought the framework and the governing question; Claude, Anthropic's model, did the research and produced the drafts. Where the research contradicted the framework's expectation, the research was followed.

What this case isolates

This is the ninth study in a sequence, and it supplies the term the other eight could not.

Every ruler examined in this sequence arrived holding force and lacking a warrant, and went out to buy one. Tughril spent twenty-five years and a hundred thousand dinars on a caliph's diploma. Henry IV, refused a papal one, manufactured a rival pope. Akbar, finding no issuer in existence, convened a commission and obtained an attestation. Charles VII took a warrant from a peasant girl. Michael VIII paid for one with his church and had it cancelled by the next pope.

Mehmed II bought nothing, because he arrived with a full set. A frontier warrant from his house's *ghaza*; an Islamic warrant under a law that grants no permission to conquer and requires none; a Persianate sovereign warrant; and, from 29 May 1453, the title *Kayser-i Rûm* — Caesar of Rome — resting on the bare proposition that whoever holds the imperial capital is the emperor. George of Trebizond, a Greek, wrote it out for him in 1466: he who holds by right the centre of the Empire is Emperor, and the centre of the Roman Empire is Constantinople.

That is a claim derived from a fact rather than from a grant, and it is the only one in nine studies. It cannot be captured, compelled, purchased, starved, hollowed, expended, forked, divorced or revoked, because every catalogued failure operates on an issuer and there is no issuer. Its cost is that it persuades only the already persuaded — which mattered not at all, because Mehmed required nothing from anybody who disputed it.

From which the case's central finding, and it is the one the whole Christendom arc has been travelling toward. **A ruler intervenes in a religion in proportion to his dependence on it.** Byzantine emperors drew their legitimacy from Orthodoxy and therefore meddled with it for eleven hundred years — iconoclasm imposed and reversed, patriarchs deposed, two unions with Rome forced on a church that refused them and enforced with persecution. **The sultan drew his from elsewhere, and no sultan ever attempted to define an article of Orthodox doctrine or convened a council to settle one.** He controlled the officer and ignored the teaching, and the two turn out to be separable, which no earlier case in this sequence had shown because everywhere else they came together.

The patriarch, correspondingly, was not losing an independence he had never held. He had been appointed and deposed by emperors since Constantine. **The conquest changed which sovereign appointed him, and the new one had no views** — which is why the Synodikon of Orthodoxy went on being recited annually in a conquered capital, anathematising by name, to a state that was not listening.

And the third element: **the fall of Constantinople cost no man in Latin Christendom a single thing he held.** No western title, revenue, jurisdiction or appointment changed. The East–West study in this sequence established that a costless event generates no remedy; here that arithmetic explains why the crusades preached after 1453 raised sermons and money and no army that mattered.

The problem of the sources

The documentary position is poor in a specific and revealing way.

The principal Greek narrative was written by a man in the conqueror's service. Kritovoulos of Imbros governed Imbros for Mehmed and dedicated his history to him, and he is **the only contemporary source for Gennadios's elevation to the patriarchate at all.**

And the founding charter does not exist. The traditional account — a comprehensive grant by Mehmed making the patriarch ethnarch of the *Rum milleti* — is substantially a later construction. Paraskevas Konortas has argued that the patriarch exercised such authority only in the eighteenth century; Hasan Çolak states that the

millet system is a nineteenth-century construct projected backwards. Early-sixteenth-century patriarchal officials knew privileges were supposed to have been granted and **could produce no document.** The elaborate description of the enthronement comes from the *Chronicon Maius*, once attributed to George Sphrantzes and now established as a composition of about 1580 by Makarios Melissenos, a known forger.

Which closes a loop this sequence opened. The East–West study recorded the Donation of Constantine — an eighth-century forgery of a fourth-century grant, securing the papacy's temporal position for six hundred years until Valla exposed it in 1440. **Two churches at opposite ends of Christendom each manufactured a founding donation, because each held a position built by accumulation and needed one built by grant.**

Against the Greek material stands an Ottoman fiscal archive that records assessments, appointments and decrees and explains nothing. **No figures are given anywhere in this study** for army sizes, casualties, populations, tax yields or the numbers taken in the child levy, because the material does not support them; the survey of 1478 giving 16,324 households and 3,927 shops in Constantinople and Galata is reported as a reported figure.

And a statement of scope: this study takes no position on the theological questions at issue between Islam and Orthodox Christianity, or between Rome and Constantinople. Its analysis is structural.

The disciplines

Five rules govern every module. **Quotation**: public-domain primary sources exactly, modern scholarship paraphrased and credited, transmitted passages flagged as transmitted. **No fabrication**, and where the traditional account rests on a forgery the study says so and works without it. **Gravity without partisanship**: the sack and the reconstruction, the doctrinal freedom and the child levy, all belong in the same account. **Legibility is not pardon.** And **held as tested, not revealed**.

What this case added to the framework

The central contribution is the sequence's zero point: **a claim requiring no issuer**, and the proposition that **a ruler needs an authorisation exactly to the extent that some party whose cooperation he requires would otherwise withhold it.**

Mehmed required nothing from any such party, which is why the mechanism nine studies have described simply does not engage — and the conditions for that are so restrictive that this is its only instance.

Beneath it, findings the case forced. That **assuming the chair is cheapest where its occupant was already subordinate to a sovereign**, since the conquest then changes only the appointing hand and nothing has to be renegotiated — the contrast with the Latin patriarch installed in the same city in 1204, and the fifty-seven years of resistance that produced, is the proof. That **a conqueror who wants the asset working aligns with the population within days**, which is why the three days of sack and the twenty-five years of repopulation are one policy at two stages. That **a conquest's holding cost varies inversely with the availability of an alternative sovereign** — 1204 and 1453 in the same city with the same population differ in nothing else.

That **where a state taxes a population for not sharing its religion, it acquires a fiscal interest in that population not converting**, so its toleration is structural rather than principled and therefore more reliable than principle. That **a licence to tax the flock** is a fourth clerical funding instrument beside endowment, state grant and exemption — and the most corrupting, producing a class financially independent of the ruler, financially dependent on the governed, and answerable to neither. That **an institution preserved for its administrative usefulness is repurposed rather than spared.**

That **an institutional credential's capturability generates conflict only where the capture is contested** — the same structure that produced a fifty-year war in the Latin west produced no doctrine at all in the east, because the appointing power had never been in play and a right never held cannot be lost. That **an office both allocable by a superior and purchasable enters a closed loop**: tenure shortens, price rises, and the holder is captured by whoever finances the purchase — which is what happened to the patriarchate over four centuries without anyone intending it.

That **an institution whose position was built by accumulation will manufacture the founding grant it lacks**, dating it to a dramatic moment and attributing it to an eyewitness. That **a religious institution's security depends on its fiscal status more reliably than on the sovereign's confession** — the monasteries were threatened by emperors who exempted them and safe under sultans who taxed

them. That **arrangements last in proportion to the absence of parties who would gain by ending them.** And that **a settlement is only as durable as the category it administers**: this one was built on *Christian* and dissolved when the populations reorganised themselves around *nation*.

The arc

Landscape. *A Conqueror Who Needed Nothing.* An empire that brought its own warrant, a church ruled by emperors for eleven hundred years, and a city whose loss would cost no man in Christendom anything he held.

1 — The Floor of Force. *Twenty-Four Miles of Land Wall.* A siege that ended a millennium in fifty-three days, and a city that was the last enclave in a territory already taken.

2 — The Settlement. *Assume the Chair.* A conqueror who kept the institution and changed the appointing hand, and the charter that was forged a century and a quarter afterwards.

3 — The Robe. *He Did Not Need the Blessing.* A sultan with four warrants and no need of a fifth, and the discovery that a conqueror who requires no authorisation is the safest sovereign a clergy can have.

4 — Formation. *The Anathemas Were Still Read.* A machinery the conquest did not touch, and the one intrusion the Ottomans did make, which took the children.

5 — The Cost Column. *The Cheapest Hold in the Collection.* A conquest that paid for itself, and a clergy that paid to be appointed.

6 — Extraction. *The Patriarch Collected It.* A poll tax the state wanted paid rather than avoided, and a hierarchy converted into its collection mechanism.

7 — Information and Suppression. *A Greek Writing for the Sultan.* A founding charter nobody could produce, and a forger in Italy filling the gap.

8 — Elite Coordination and the Default. *The Sultan Appointed Him.* A church whose head was chosen by a Muslim sovereign, and the reason that was never a crisis.

9 — Plurality or Foreclosure. *The Mountain Kept Its Charters.* Why the monasteries survived a Muslim sovereign better than a Christian one, and the line below which none of it reached.

10 — Change and Collapse. *The Office Became a Commodity.* Four hundred and sixty-nine years, the two features that slowly ruined the central office, and the nationalism that dissolved the rest.

11 — The Grim Accounting. *What Ended and What Did Not.* A ledger in which the state and the church do not belong to the same party.

12 — Convergence and Divergence. *The End of Rome.* The close of a nine-study arc — with the strongest case against the framework itself, stated fully and answered.

LANDSCAPE

A CONQUEROR WHO NEEDED NOTHING

Landscape · the two orders on the eve — an empire that had brought its own warrant, a church that had been ruled by emperors for eleven hundred years, and a city whose loss would cost no man in Christendom anything he held

The conqueror's position

Begin with what the Ottomans did **not** need, because it is the whole difference between this case and the eight that precede it in this sequence.

Every ruler examined in this sequence so far arrived at a position holding force and lacking a warrant, and went out to buy one. Tughril bought a caliph's diploma. Henry IV wanted a papal one so badly that when refused he manufactured a rival pope. Akbar, finding no issuer in existence, assembled a commission and obtained a signed attestation. Charles VII took a warrant from a peasant girl. Michael VIII paid for one with his church and it was cancelled.

Mehmed II bought nothing, because he arrived with a full set.

The Ottoman sultan in 1453 held, simultaneously:

A frontier warrant. The dynasty had risen on the Bithynian march as *ghazis*, warriors of the faith on the border with Christendom, and the taking of the great Christian city was the consummation of that identity rather than a departure from it.

An Islamic warrant. He ruled as a Muslim sovereign over Muslim subjects, in a state with *qadis*, *madrasas* and a body of law, and the conquest of the House of War required no external authorisation whatever — there was no office in Sunni Islam that granted permission to conquer, and the Abbasid caliphate had been destroyed at Baghdad in 1258.

A Turco-Persian warrant. The vocabulary of the sultanate, the *khan*, the just ruler of the Persianate mirror-for-princes tradition — the apparatus this collection examined in the Seljuk study, inherited entire.

And, from 29 May 1453, a Roman one.

Kayser-i Rum

The last is the most interesting and the most audacious, and it rests on a proposition of pure possession.

Mehmed took the title **Kayser-i Rûm** — Caesar of Rome — on the ground that Constantinople had been the seat and capital of the Roman empire since 330, and that whoever held the imperial capital was the emperor.

The argument was made for him, in Greek, by a Greek. **George of Trebizond**, writing in 1466, put it in terms this collection should record exactly:

> *No one should doubt that he is Emperor of the Romans. He who holds by right the centre of the Empire is Emperor; and the centre of the Roman Empire is Constantinople.*

That is a title derived from a fact rather than from a grant, and it is the only such claim in this entire sequence.

Every other authorisation examined here works by transfer: a caliph invests, a pope crowns, an assembly attests, a lama confers. Each requires an issuer, and the whole of this sequence has been about the properties an issuer must have and the ways the transaction fails.

Mehmed's Roman claim required no issuer at all. It says: the empire is a thing, the city is its centre, I hold the city, therefore I am. Nobody has to agree, nobody can revoke it, and nobody can be bought to withhold it — because there is no transaction.

Western monarchs rejected it. The Patriarchate of Constantinople came to acknowledge it. **And neither response affected it in the slightest, which is the point.**

The church's position

Now the other side, and the essential fact about it is one that no western case in this sequence contains.

The patriarch of Constantinople had never been an independent power and had never claimed to be.

For eleven hundred years he had been appointed by emperors, deposed by emperors, and had watched councils convened by emperors define the faith. The East–West study in this sequence set that out: Justinian legislated for the church as a matter of course; Michael III deposed Ignatios and installed Photios; Michael VIII deposed three patriarchs in twenty years and got the fourth to absolve him.

Within living memory of 1453, the reigning emperor had forced a union with Rome that the church had refused, deposed the patriarchs who resisted, and persecuted the monks who preached against it. The union of Florence had been signed in 1439 and proclaimed in Hagia Sophia in December 1452, five months before the siege, and the proclamation emptied the church.

So the question the framework puts to any conquered interpretive class — what does it lose? — returns an unexpected answer here.

The patriarch was not losing his independence, because he had never had any. He was changing which sovereign appointed him.

And the new sovereign had one enormous advantage over the old one from the patriarch's side, which is the finding this landscape exists to establish. **The Byzantine emperor was Orthodox and therefore had views.** He cared what the creed said, who was anathematised, whether the church united with Rome. He intervened because the doctrine was his own and its content mattered to his standing.

The sultan was Muslim and had no views, and could not have had any that would bind an Orthodox Christian. He wanted taxes, order and a chain of responsibility. He did not care what was in the creed.

What nobody in Christendom stood to lose

And the third element of the landscape is the one that explains the silence, and it is a direct application of a finding this sequence has already made.

The East–West study established that the schism between Rome and Constantinople transferred no title, vacated no office and made nobody's holdings insecure — and that this is why it was never repaired.

The same arithmetic explains why Constantinople fell without a crusade.

Run the inventory. If Constantinople falls, does the King of France lose anything he holds? He does not. Does the Duke of Burgundy? No. Does the Pope's title, revenue, jurisdiction or appointment power change by one item? It does not — the Greek church had never paid Rome annates, never sent appeals, never received papal provisions. Does any western bishop's see become insecure? No. Does any prince's claim to his own lands weaken? No.

The permanent loss of the Christian east cost no man in Latin Christendom a single thing he held.

Compare the western schism of 1378, which cost every prelate and crown in Europe a secure title to something, and was repaired in thirty-nine years by parties acting on that cost.

A catastrophe that imposes no loss on parties able to act will not be prevented, and the crusades preached after 1453 raised sympathy, sermons and money, and no army that mattered. The union of Florence had been signed to buy exactly that army and it did not come, because the men who would have had to send it had nothing at stake.

Reading the eve against the framework

The first finding, and it reframes the whole sequence. Every case examined here has assumed that a conqueror must acquire an authorisation from a party he cannot control. This case shows the alternative and it is not merely available but superior.

A conqueror who brings his own complete warrant does not enter the market at all — and therefore cannot be overcharged, cannot be refused, and cannot have the instrument revoked, because there is no issuer with interests. Mehmed's Roman title rested on possession of a city; his Islamic title on a law that requires no permission to conquer; his frontier title on what his ancestors had done.

The most durable authorisation is the one that requires no issuer, and its cost is that it persuades only those already disposed to be persuaded — which mattered not at all, because the people it needed to persuade were his own soldiers and administrators, and they were already persuaded.

The second finding, and it is the case's organising insight. The conquered interpretive class was not losing autonomy because it had never held any, and its position under the new sovereign was likely to improve.

A ruler intervenes in a religion in proportion to his need for it. The Byzantine emperor needed Orthodoxy — his own legitimacy ran through it — and therefore meddled with it constantly, deposing patriarchs, forcing unions and persecuting monks. The sultan did not need it and therefore left it alone.

Being ruled by a sovereign of another faith who does not require your doctrine is a more comfortable position for a clergy than being ruled by a co-religionist who does. That proposition sounds perverse and it is the plain reading of what happened, and the modules below trace it.

A note on sources.

Mehmed II's adoption of the title *Kayser-i Rûm* after the conquest, and its basis in possession of the imperial capital consecrated by Constantine in 330, are standard; the claim's rejection by most western monarchs and its acknowledgement by the Patriarchate of Constantinople are likewise standard.

The passage from George of Trebizond is quoted in the English rendering in which it is commonly transmitted, from his address to Mehmed II of 1466; the study has not verified it against the Greek and reports it as transmitted.

The Ottoman *ghaza* tradition, the Islamic legal position requiring no external authorisation for conquest, and the destruction of the Abbasid caliphate at Baghdad in 1258 are standard. The Persianate elements of Ottoman sovereign vocabulary are treated in the Seljuk study in this sequence.

The Byzantine imperial appointment and deposition of patriarchs, and the convocation of councils by emperors, are documented in the East–West Schism study; Michael VIII's depositions are documented in the study of the union of Lyon. The union of Florence of 1439 and its proclamation in Hagia Sophia in December 1452 are treated in both.

The proposition that the fall of Constantinople imposed no loss on any western titleholder, and the connection to the finding that costless events generate no remedy, is this study's, building on the East–West Schism study.

MODULE 1

TWENTY-FOUR MILES OF LAND WALL

Module 1 · the floor of force — a siege that ended a millennium in fifty-three days, an army the west could see coming for a century, and a city that had already been taken once

The disparity

The military facts can be given briefly because they were not close.

Constantinople in April 1453 held a population that had fallen catastrophically — the fifteenth-century city was a collection of villages inside imperial walls built for half a million people — and a defending force of perhaps seven or eight thousand, of whom a substantial part were Genoese and Venetian volunteers under Giovanni Giustiniani.

Mehmed brought an army whose size is reported across a very wide range and which was, on any figure, many times the defence; a fleet that was carried overland into the Golden Horn when the chain barred the entrance; and an artillery train including bombards cast for the purpose, the largest of them built by the Hungarian founder Urban, who had offered his services to the emperor first and had been unable to be paid.

The siege ran from 6 April to 29 May 1453 — fifty-three days. The walls that had held for a thousand years were reduced by gunpowder. Constantine XI died in the fighting and his body was never identified with certainty.

What the city actually was

But the military account misses the structural fact, which is that **the conquest had effectively been completed decades earlier and the city was the last item.**

The Ottomans had crossed into Europe in the 1350s. By 1400 they held Thrace, Bulgaria, Macedonia and most of Greece, and Constantinople was an enclave inside their territory, connected to the outside world by sea and dependent on Italian shipping. Byzantine emperors had been Ottoman vassals, had paid tribute, had campaigned in Ottoman armies, and had travelled to Europe personally to beg for help — John VIII to Ferrara and Florence, Manuel II to Paris and London.

Mehmed did not conquer an empire in 1453. He removed a hole in the middle of one, and the operation's importance was symbolic and strategic rather than territorial.

That matters for the whole case, because it explains the character of the settlement. **A conqueror taking a city that is already surrounded by his own territory has no frontier to secure and no army to destroy. What he has is a piece of real estate he wants working**, and the modules that follow describe a policy aimed at exactly that.

The three days and the decision

The city was taken by assault, and under the law and custom of the time a city taken by assault was subject to three days of plunder, which is what happened. The population was enslaved in large numbers; churches were stripped; Hagia Sophia was entered and its people taken.

And then it stopped, and the direction reversed within days.

Mehmed entered the city, ordered the plunder halted earlier than custom permitted, converted Hagia Sophia to a mosque, and began — immediately — the work that occupies the rest of this study: **repopulating and restarting a city he had just emptied.**

He bought back captives to settle them. He guaranteed the Genoese of Galata their persons, property and commerce by a written instrument in June 1453, on terms of tribute and disarmament. He began the *sürgün* — the compulsory transfer of populations from other parts of the empire into the capital — moving Muslims, Greeks, Armenians and Jews in to fill the districts. He founded mosques, markets and endowments, and encouraged his viziers to do the same.

By a survey of 1478 the city and Galata held 16,324 households and 3,927 shops. That is a quarter of a century of deliberate reconstruction, and it is the best single indicator of what the conquest was for.

What the floor was actually needed for

Which yields the module's structural point.

Mehmed's armies were needed to take the city and were not needed to hold the population, and the reason is the one the Landscape established. The population was not going to be held against a rival claimant, because there was no rival claimant with an army. The Byzantine state was gone; the Morea fell in 1460 and Trebizond in 1461; and the west, as the Landscape showed, had nothing at stake.

So the floor's function shifted, within weeks, from conquest to policing — and policing a population that had no alternative sovereign to defect to is the cheapest military task in this collection.

Compare the Seljuk case, where the conqueror's own tribal army was a standing grievance and the state had to buy a second one. Compare the Latin empire installed in this same city in 1204, which spent fifty-seven years as an occupation garrison in a hostile country and never established anything.

The Ottomans took the city with an army and held it with a tax register, and the difference between them and the Latins of 1204 is the subject of the settlement module.

Reading the floor against the framework

The first finding, on what a conquest is for. This collection has generally found conquerors seeking land, revenue or a frontier. This one sought a **functioning city**, and the distinction drives everything.

Where a conqueror wants the conquered asset working rather than cleared, his interest and the population's align within days of the assault — because a city without inhabitants is worth nothing to him, and he will therefore spend to restore what he has just destroyed.

That is not benevolence and should not be read as it. It is the ordinary logic of a purchaser who has damaged the goods in taking possession. **The three days of sack and the twenty-five years of repopulation are the same policy at two stages**, and the second is the reason the first was stopped early.

The second finding, on conquests that are completed before their famous date. The Ottoman position in 1453 had been built over a century, and Constantinople was the last enclave in a territory already held.

A conquest whose surrounding territory is already secured requires no post-conquest floor, because there is nowhere for the population to defect to and no external power with a stake. The floor's cost after 1453 was therefore minimal — which is the largest single entry in this case's cost column, and it is a saving rather than an expense.

A note on sources.

The siege of Constantinople from 6 April to 29 May 1453, the defending force of roughly seven to eight thousand including Genoese and Venetian contingents under Giovanni Giustiniani, the transport of Ottoman ships overland into the Golden Horn, the artillery train and Urban's bombards with his prior approach to the Byzantine side, and the death of Constantine XI in the fighting, are standard. **No figure is given here for the Ottoman army**, because the reported figures vary by an order of magnitude and none is reliable.

The Ottoman crossing into Europe in the 1350s, the reduction of Constantinople to an enclave, Byzantine tributary status and imperial journeys to the west including Manuel II's and John VIII's, are standard.

The three days of plunder and its early curtailment, the conversion of Hagia Sophia, the guarantee to the Genoese of Galata in June 1453, the *sürgün* transfers, and Mehmed's foundation of institutions and his encouragement of his viziers to do likewise, are standard. **The survey of 1478 giving 16,324 households and 3,927 shops in Constantinople and Galata is as reported** and is the figure conventionally cited.

The falls of the Morea in 1460 and Trebizond in 1461 are standard. The Latin empire of 1204–61 is treated in the East–West Schism study in this sequence.

The proposition that a conqueror who wants the asset working aligns with the population within days, and that a conquest whose surrounding territory is already secured requires no subsequent floor, is this study's.

MODULE 2

ASSUME THE CHAIR

Module 2 · the settlement — a conqueror who kept the institution and changed the appointing hand, the arrangement that was made piecemeal, and the charter that was forged afterwards

The obvious move

Mehmed's problem after 29 May 1453 was administrative and it had an obvious solution.

He had acquired a large Orthodox Christian population — in the city, and across the Balkans and Anatolia he already held — which had to be taxed, kept in order, and given some means of settling its own affairs. He had no intention of converting it; mass conversion would have destroyed the *cizye*, the poll tax on non-Muslims, which was a substantial revenue.

And there was an institution sitting there which had performed exactly those functions for a thousand years, staffed, funded, legitimate in the population's eyes, and currently vacant at the top.

The patriarchate had been effectively empty since 1451, when the last incumbent had left for Rome over the union. So Mehmed did what this collection has watched conquerors do repeatedly and what the framework predicts as the cheapest available move.

He assumed the chair.

In January 1454 he had **Georgios Kourtesios Scholarios** — a monk, a scholar, the leading intellectual opponent of the union with Rome, who had been taken captive in the fall and sold, and was located and brought back — elevated as patriarch under the name **Gennadios II**.

The choice was exact. **Mehmed selected the man whose entire public position was hostility to the west**, which guaranteed that the head of his Christian population would have no interest in a Latin restoration, and which the population itself would receive as a vindication.

What was actually granted

And here the study must be careful, because the standard account of what followed is substantially a later construction, and the construction is itself one of the case's findings.

The traditional story is that Mehmed granted Gennadios a charter — a *berat* — making him ethnarch of all the Orthodox Christians of the empire, head of the *Rum milleti*, with civil as well as religious jurisdiction, and that the *millet* system dates from that act.

The current scholarship largely dismantles it. Paraskevas Konortas has argued that the patriarch came to exercise authority over the whole Orthodox community of the empire, and to have that community defined by the Ottomans as *Rum milleti*, **only in the eighteenth century**. Hasan Çolak states it more sharply: the millet system is a nineteenth-century construct projected back onto the earlier centuries. Tom Papademetriou's work on the early Ottoman centuries reaches compatible conclusions, and notes that **Kritovoulos is the only contemporary source for Gennadios's elevation at all.**

Worse for the traditional account: the patriarchate's own sixteenth-century officials **had no documents**. They knew that privileges were supposed to have been granted at the conquest and could produce nothing to prove it, and the elaborate description of Gennadios's enthronement comes from the *Chronicon Maius*, once attributed to George Sphrantzes and now known to be a composition of about 1580 by **Makarios Melissenos, a forger.**

So the founding charter of the Orthodox church's position under Ottoman rule appears to have been assembled retrospectively, over a century later, by an institution that needed one and did not have one.

The Donation of Mehmet

That should be set beside a fact from the beginning of this sequence, because the two are the same operation.

The East–West study recorded that the **Donation of Constantine** — the document purporting to record the first Christian emperor's grant of primacy and temporal dominion to Pope Sylvester — was an eighth-century forgery that stood for six hundred years and was exposed only in 1440.

The Orthodox church, under Ottoman rule, produced its own. Not a single document but a tradition: a founding grant by the conqueror, generous,

comprehensive, and dated to the moment of maximum drama, which secured in retrospect a position that had in fact been built up piecemeal over generations of negotiation.

Both were manufactured by an institution that needed a founding grant and possessed only an accumulation of practice, and both worked, and both were exposed by modern textual scholarship.

That is a pattern rather than a coincidence and the closing section will name it.

What the arrangement actually was

Strip the retrospective charter away and what remains is unglamorous and workable.

The patriarch was appointed by the sultan — in practice, confirmed by an imperial document, the *berat*, whose issue became the settled procedure — and could be deposed by him.

He held jurisdiction over the internal affairs of his community: marriage, divorce, inheritance, ecclesiastical discipline, and disputes between Christians who chose his courts, though Christians frequently used the *qadi* courts as well and did so throughout the period.

He was responsible for his community's obedience and for the delivery of its taxes, which is the function that mattered to the sultan.

He paid for his office — a payment on appointment that grew over the following centuries into the ruinous system the module on collapse examines.

And his church kept its doctrine, its liturgy, its calendar, its monasteries and its orders, entirely untouched.

What each side got

Score the exchange and it is the least lopsided settlement in this collection.

The sultan got a self-administering population, a tax-collection mechanism he did not have to build, a chain of responsibility with a single addressee, a head of the Christians who was structurally opposed to the west, and all of it at essentially no cost.

The patriarch got an office he had not held securely for years, jurisdiction over a wider Orthodox population than the shrunken empire had contained, the removal of the union with Rome, and — the item that matters most — **a sovereign who did not care what he taught.**

And the population got the end of the union, an end to imperial doctrinal interference, and a tax.

Reading the settlement against the framework

The first finding, on assuming the chair. This collection has repeatedly found conquerors occupying an existing position rather than building one. This case is the purest instance and it identifies the condition under which it works best.

Assuming the chair is cheapest where the chair's occupant was already subordinate to a sovereign, because then the conquest changes only the identity of the appointing power and nothing in the institution's self-understanding has to be renegotiated. The patriarch had been appointed by emperors for a thousand years. **A conqueror who appoints him is not doing a new thing to the institution; he is doing the old thing with a new hand.**

The contrast with 1204 is exact and is the proof. The Latins in this same city installed a **Latin** patriarch — that is, they replaced the institution rather than occupying its appointing position — and got fifty-seven years of resistance and a permanent hatred. The Ottomans kept the Greek patriarch and got four centuries of administration.

The second finding, on manufactured founding grants. The Orthodox position under Ottoman rule was built by accumulation and was retrospectively provided with a charter, exactly as the papacy's temporal position had been.

An institution whose position has been built by practice will eventually manufacture the grant it lacks, and it will date the grant to a moment of maximum drama and maximum plausibility, because a position derived from a founding act is defensible in a way that a position derived from accumulated custom is not.

The corollary is a rule of reading and this collection can now state it with two instances: **where an institution's foundational charter is dated to a dramatic scene and its own archives cannot produce the document, suspect that the position preceded the charter and the charter was written to explain it.**

A note on sources.

The vacancy of the patriarchal throne before 1453 and the elevation of Gennadios II Scholarios in January 1454 follow the standard accounts; the date 6 January 1454 is conventionally given. **Kritovoulos is the only contemporary source for the elevation**, as noted in the review literature on Papademetriou's *Render unto the Sultan*, and this study reports it accordingly.

The revisionist position on the millet system is stated as reported: Paraskevas Konortas's conclusion that the patriarch exercised full authority over the whole Orthodox community, defined as *Rum milleti*, only in the eighteenth century; Hasan

Çolak's statement that the millet system is a nineteenth-century construct projected backwards; and the observation that early-sixteenth-century patriarchal officials possessed no documentary evidence of privileges granted at the conquest. **The *Chronicon Maius*, formerly attributed to George Sphrantzes, is a composition of about 1580 by Makarios Melissenos and is not relied on here.**

The *berat* as the settled instrument confirming a patriarch, the patriarch's jurisdiction over personal status and ecclesiastical matters, the concurrent Christian use of *qadi* courts, and the payment made on appointment, are standard, with the caution that their formalisation belongs to later periods rather than to 1454.

The Donation of Constantine and Valla's demonstration of 1440 are treated in the East–West Schism study in this sequence.

The proposition that assuming the chair is cheapest where its occupant was already subordinate, and the rule of reading concerning manufactured founding charters, are this study's.

MODULE 3

HE DID NOT NEED THE BLESSING

Module 3 · the robe — a sultan with four warrants and no need of a fifth, a patriarch who conferred nothing, and the discovery that a conqueror who requires no authorisation is the safest sovereign a clergy can have

The transaction that did not happen

The central fact about the robe in this case is a negative and it should be stated as bluntly as possible.

Mehmed II never asked the patriarch of Constantinople to authorise anything. He did not seek a coronation. He did not seek an anointing. He did not seek a declaration that his rule was lawful, a commemoration in the liturgy as the rightful sovereign, or any ecclesiastical act whatever bearing on his own title.

Contrast every other case in this sequence. Tughril spent twenty-five years, a war and a hundred thousand dinars obtaining a caliph's diploma. Henry IV stood barefoot in the snow. Michael VIII paid for a papal warrant with his church and it was cancelled. Charles VII marched a hundred and fifty miles through enemy country to be anointed at Reims.

Mehmed appointed a patriarch and asked him for nothing.

Why he did not need it

Because, as the Landscape established, he had brought his own, and the structure of what he had brought is worth setting out because it is unusual.

A ghazi warrant, which is a claim about what his house had done, addressed to his own soldiers and to the Muslim frontier population, and requiring no issuer.

An Islamic warrant, which is a claim about lawful war under a law that grants no permissions and requires none, addressed to the *ulema* and the Muslim subject population.

A Persianate sovereign warrant, addressed to the administrative class, in the vocabulary of the just king.

And the Roman warrant, which rests on the possession of a city and is addressed to everybody who cared about the empire, including his new Greek subjects.

Four robes, four audiences, and not one of them requiring a party who could refuse.

That last property is the one the sequence has spent eight studies establishing as decisive, and here it appears in a form the framework has not previously had to handle.

An authorisation's value comes from the issuer's ability to refuse. A claim from possession has no issuer, and therefore has neither the value nor the vulnerability. It cannot be revoked, cannot be bought away by a rival, and cannot be withdrawn at a change of administration. It also cannot persuade anybody who does not already accept the premise — and Mehmed did not need to persuade anybody who did not.

What the patriarch conferred

Nothing, and this is where the case's second finding lives.

Gennadios II did not crown Mehmed, did not anoint him, did not proclaim him God's viceregent, and did not — so far as the record shows — perform any act that transferred authority to the sultan. The acknowledgement of Mehmed's Roman title by the patriarchate came later and functioned as a recognition of a fact, not as a conferral.

What Gennadios did do was write, at Mehmed's request, a statement of the Christian faith — the *Homologia*, a short exposition of Orthodox belief for a Muslim sovereign who was curious about it.

That is the reverse of an authorisation. It is the conquered clergy explaining itself to a ruler who has asked, rather than the clergy certifying the ruler to his subjects. And it is possible only because the ruler's own position did not depend on the answer.

And therefore the church was safe

Which produces the finding the whole study turns on.

A ruler who needs a clergy's authorisation must control what that clergy says. A ruler who needs none can leave it entirely alone.

Set the two Byzantine and Ottoman positions side by side on this single axis and the whole history explains itself.

Under the emperors, Orthodoxy was the source of imperial legitimacy. The emperor's own standing ran through it. Therefore the content of the doctrine was an imperial interest, and emperors intervened constantly: iconoclasm imposed and reversed over a century; patriarchs deposed for disagreeing; the hesychast controversy

settled by imperially convened councils; and twice — 1274 and 1439 — a union with Rome forced on a church that refused it, with persecution to enforce it.

Under the sultans, Orthodoxy was somebody else's religion. It conferred nothing on the sultan and could not damage him. Therefore its content was not an imperial interest, and the Ottomans did not intervene in it. **No sultan ever attempted to define an article of Orthodox doctrine.** No sultan convened a council of the Orthodox church to settle a theological question. No sultan forced a union with anybody.

The Orthodox church's doctrine was more secure under a Muslim conqueror than it had been under Christian emperors, for the exact reason that the conqueror had no use for it.

That is not a paradox and it is not an Ottoman virtue. **It is a direct consequence of the position**, and it is the sharpest statement this sequence has produced of the relation between a ruler's need and a religion's freedom.

The one thing the sultan did care about

And to keep the account honest, the boundary must be marked.

The sultan cared enormously about **who held the office**, because the office was an administrative instrument. He appointed and deposed patriarchs freely, at a rate that increased over the following centuries until the throne changed hands constantly and the office was effectively purchased.

He cared about the officer and not about the doctrine, which is the precise inverse of the Byzantine emperor, who cared about both and about the doctrine most.

A sovereign will control the appointments to any institution he uses and will regulate the content of any institution he relies on — and the two are separable, which no case in this sequence had previously demonstrated because in every other case they came together.

Reading the robe against the framework

The first finding, and it is the study's central contribution.

A conqueror who arrives with a complete set of warrants requiring no issuer does not enter the authorisation market, and therefore obtains the cheapest and most stable position in this entire sequence. He cannot be overcharged, cannot be refused, and cannot be revoked. Mehmed II is the only ruler examined in nine studies who was in that position, and the arrangement he built lasted four hundred and sixty-nine years.

The cost of a possession-based claim is that it persuades only the already persuaded. **Mehmed's Roman title was rejected by every western monarch and it did not matter, because no western monarch had anything he needed.** A claim from possession is sufficient exactly when the holder requires nothing from parties who dispute it — and this collection should now expect such claims wherever a conqueror's needs are entirely internal.

The second finding, and it inverts an expectation the framework carried in.

The framework has treated a conqueror's borrowing of the conquered doctrine as the cheap move — the thing that makes force inexpensive. This case shows the cheaper one.

Where a conqueror needs nothing from the conquered religion, he leaves it alone, and leaving it alone is cheaper still — because interference is what generates resistance, and a clergy that is administratively used and doctrinally ignored has no grievance to organise.

State it generally: **a ruler intervenes in a religion in proportion to his dependence on it.** Emperors who drew their legitimacy from Orthodoxy meddled with Orthodoxy; a sultan who drew his from elsewhere did not. And therefore the safest sovereign for a clergy is one who needs its administration and not its blessing.

Which is the answer to the question this whole Christendom arc has been circling. The union of Florence was forced on the Greek church by a Christian emperor who needed a western army. It was proclaimed in Hagia Sophia in December 1452 to an empty building. Five months later the city fell, and the first act of the conquering sultan's ecclesiastical settlement was to install as patriarch the man who had led the opposition to that union.

The population's refusal was vindicated by a conqueror who had no interest in the question.

A note on sources.

That Mehmed II sought no ecclesiastical authorisation of his own rule from the patriarchate, and that no coronation, anointing or liturgical conferral was performed, is a description of the record; the later patriarchal acknowledgement of the Ottoman claim to Roman succession is standard and is described here as recognition of a fact rather than conferral.

Gennadios II's *Homologia*, composed at Mehmed's request as an exposition of the Christian faith, is standard; it is described here in general terms and no text is quoted.

The imperial interventions in Orthodox doctrine — iconoclasm, the depositions of patriarchs, the hesychast councils, and the unions of 1274 and 1439 — are documented

in the East–West Schism and union of Lyon studies in this sequence.

The absence of any Ottoman attempt to define Orthodox doctrine, and the concurrent Ottoman control over patriarchal appointment and deposition, are standard and are treated further in Modules 8 and 10.

The four warrants attributed to Mehmed here — ghazi, Islamic, Persianate and Roman — are a summary of the standard account of Ottoman legitimating vocabulary, and the analysis of them as claims requiring no issuer is this study's.

The propositions that a conqueror with a complete internal warrant does not enter the authorisation market, and that a ruler intervenes in a religion in proportion to his dependence on it, are this study's, and are the case's central contributions.

MODULE 4

THE ANATHEMAS WERE STILL READ

Module 4 · formation — a machinery the conquest did not touch, a liturgy that went on condemning the union, and the one intrusion the Ottomans did make, which took the children

What did not change

The formation of an Orthodox Christian after 1453 was, in almost every particular, the formation of an Orthodox Christian before it.

The parish, the liturgy, the calendar, the fast, the saints, the icons, the sermon, the confraternity, the monastery. The catechesis of children by mothers and priests. The rhythms of Great Lent and Pascha. **None of it was interfered with, and none of it had ever been built by the state anyway.**

And the instrument the union of Lyon study identified as the decisive one continued without interruption.

The Synodikon of Orthodoxy was still read, in every church, on the first Sunday of Great Lent. Composed in 843 at the restoration of the icons, acclaiming the defenders of the faith and then anathematising heresies and heretics by name, continuously added to across the centuries — it went on being recited under Ottoman rule exactly as it had been recited under the emperors.

And what it anathematised included the union. Bekkos, the unionist patriarch of Michael VIII's reign, had been added to the list. The Florentine union was condemned formally after the conquest, at a synod under the patriarchate in the following decades.

So the annual recitation continued, in a city with a mosque in Hagia Sophia, under a Muslim sultan who did not know or care what was being said, and it condemned the western church and the emperors who had tried to unite with it.

A conqueror who requires nothing of a religion does not need to notice what it teaches, and Ottoman Constantinople is the demonstration.

What the conquest actually did to formation

Two things, and they run in opposite directions.

It removed the imperial interference. No sultan convened a council to settle Orthodox doctrine; no sultan deposed a patriarch for a theological position; no sultan forced a union. The pressure that had produced iconoclasm, the hesychast controversies and two forced unions was simply gone — because the party applying it had drawn its own legitimacy from the doctrine and the new party did not.

And it removed the Greek higher education that had sustained the church's intellectual class. The imperial court, the patriarchal school and the network of aristocratic patronage that had produced men like Bessarion, Plethon and Scholarios himself did not survive the conquest in that form. The learned tradition continued in the monasteries and eventually in schools founded under Ottoman rule and in the Greek diaspora, particularly at Venice and Padua — but the world that had trained a Scholarios was gone, and the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are, by common consent, a thin period for Greek theology.

The doctrine was preserved intact and the capacity to develop it was substantially reduced, and both are consequences of the same settlement.

The devshirme

And there is one Ottoman intrusion into Christian formation, and it is by far the most serious thing in this study.

The **devşirme** was the periodic levy of Christian boys — principally from the Balkans, principally rural, taken at intervals from villages by imperial officers — who were removed from their families, converted to Islam, trained, and enrolled in the Janissary corps or in the palace service.

The ablest rose extraordinarily high: grand viziers, admirals, provincial governors. The institution supplied the Ottoman state with an administrative and military elite recruited outside the Muslim aristocracy and therefore dependent entirely on the sultan.

This collection has met that instrument before. The Seljuk study examined the purchase of *ghulams* — slave soldiers bought as boys, converted, trained, without tribe or lineage or rival loyalty — and identified the logic: **a ruler recruits his fighting and governing core from outside the population that could otherwise supply a rival.**

The *devşirme* is that instrument in its most developed form, and its cost was paid by Christian villages in a currency this collection has not previously had to enter: **children.**

It should be recorded as what it was. Families concealed sons, married them early to make them ineligible, and in some regions the levy was resented for centuries. It was also, in some places and periods, sought after — the boys' prospects being incomparably better than a Balkan village could offer — and both facts are attested and neither cancels the other.

And it was formation in the framework's precise sense: the state taking children before their loyalties had set, and forming them completely, in the only place where the Ottoman order ever did that to its Christian subjects.

Reading formation against the framework

The first finding, and it completes the module on the robe.

A conqueror who requires nothing of the conquered religion will not interfere with its content, and its formation machinery will therefore run unaltered under him — including the parts that condemn his existence, because he is not listening and has no reason to.

The Synodikon is the demonstration. A text that anathematises by name, read annually, in a conquered capital, was of no interest whatever to the conquering power, because the conquering power's legitimacy did not run through the tradition doing the anathematising.

The corollary is uncomfortable for the conquered and it is the honest reading: doctrinal freedom under such a conqueror is not a concession and not a right. It is indifference, and it lasts exactly as long as the indifference does.

The second finding, on the one intrusion. Where the Ottoman state did intervene in Christian formation, it intervened at the only point that mattered to it — **the supply of its own elite** — and it did so by taking the children.

A ruler who leaves a religion's doctrine alone may nonetheless take its young, because the two are different interests: the doctrine is worth nothing to him and the population is a recruiting ground. The *devşirme* is the sharpest instance in this collection of a state ignoring what a community believes and taxing what it produces, where what it produced was sons.

And the third, which is the cost of the whole settlement. The doctrine survived and the learning thinned.

An interpretive class preserved by a ruler who does not need it will keep what it has and will lose the institutions that let it make more — because those institutions were sustained by the court, the aristocracy and the patronage of a state that had a use for theology, and the new state had none.

A note on sources.

The continuity of Orthodox parish life, liturgy, calendar and monasticism under Ottoman rule is standard. The Synodikon of Orthodoxy and its annual recitation are documented in the union of Lyon study in this sequence; the addition of Bekkos to the anathemas and the post-conquest synodal condemnation of the Florentine union are standard.

The absence of Ottoman intervention in Orthodox doctrine is treated in Module 3. The decline of Greek higher learning after the conquest, the survival of the tradition in monasteries and in the diaspora at Venice and Padua, and the general assessment of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a thin period, are the received scholarly account and are reported as such.

The *devşirme* — its periodic levy of Christian boys principally from Balkan rural populations, their conversion and training, their enrolment in the Janissary corps and palace service, and the rise of some to the highest offices — is standard. That families both evaded the levy and in some periods sought it is likewise standard and both are reported. **No figures are given for the numbers taken**, because the estimates vary widely and the levy's frequency and extent changed over time.

The comparison with Seljuk *ghulam* recruitment draws on the Seljuk study in this sequence.

The propositions that doctrinal freedom under an indifferent conqueror is indifference rather than concession, and that an interpretive class so preserved keeps its content and loses its productive institutions, are this study's.

MODULE 5

THE CHEAPEST HOLD IN THE COLLECTION

Module 5 · the cost column — a conquest that paid for itself, a clergy that paid to be appointed, and a bill that fell almost entirely on people outside the transaction

What it cost to hold

Price the Ottoman position in Constantinople after 1453 and the figure is the lowest in this sequence.

No garrison against a rival claimant, because there was no rival claimant with an army. The Byzantine state was extinguished; the Morea and Trebizond followed within eight years; and the west, as the Landscape established, had nothing at stake.

No conversion programme. Mass conversion was against the state's fiscal interest, since the *cizye* was payable only by non-Muslims. Conversion happened, substantially in some regions and over centuries, and it was not a policy.

No parallel administration for the Christian population, because the existing one was retained and its head was made responsible.

No doctrinal policing, because the doctrine was of no interest.

No suppression apparatus, because there was nothing to suppress: a population with no alternative sovereign, no organised resistance and no external sponsor does not require watching.

And no payment for legitimation, because — Module 3 — the sultan required none.

Set that against the costs this collection has priced elsewhere. The Seljuks paid for two incompatible armies and a caliph's diploma. The Latin empire of 1204 spent fifty-seven years as an occupation garrison in a hostile country and never established anything. Michael VIII spent his church, his frontier and his funeral. **The Ottoman hold on Constantinople cost the sack, the reconstruction, and an administrative document.**

What was spent

The one substantial expenditure ran the other way, and it is the reconstruction.

Mehmed spent heavily and for decades on making the city work: the *sürgün* transfers of population, the buying-back of captives to settle them, the foundation of mosques, markets, baths, endowments and the great complex around his own mosque; the encouragement of his viziers to found their own; the restoration of the water supply; and eventually the palace.

That is the cost of a purchaser repairing goods he damaged in taking possession, and by the survey of 1478 it had produced 16,324 households and 3,927 shops. It was money spent on an asset rather than on holding down a population, which is a different kind of entry entirely.

What the church paid

And here the settlement's price to the other party comes into view, and it grew.

The patriarch paid for his office. A payment on appointment — a *peşkeş* — became the settled practice, and its consequences over the following centuries are the subject of the module on collapse. In 1454 it was modest or nominal; by the seventeenth century the office changed hands repeatedly for very large sums and the patriarchate was in permanent debt.

The church collected and delivered. The patriarch's usefulness to the state was as the head of a chain of responsibility for the Christian population's obedience and its taxes, and the apparatus of collection ran downward through the metropolitans and the parishes.

Which converted the hierarchy into a fiscal instrument, and that is the settlement's deepest cost to the church and it does not appear as a payment anywhere. A bishop who is responsible for delivering his flock's taxes stands in a different relation to his flock than a bishop who is not, and the relation deteriorated over four centuries.

What the population paid

The *cizye*, the poll tax on non-Muslim adult males, at rates varying by wealth and period.

The ordinary taxes on land and produce that everyone paid.

The various disabilities of *dhimmi* status — restrictions on dress in some periods, on building and repairing churches, on riding horses, on legal testimony against Muslims, and on bearing arms — enforced inconsistently across four centuries and

regions.

And, in the Balkans, the children.

And what was saved

Against all of that, one item belongs on the population's side of the ledger and it should be entered honestly because the sources on both sides are motivated to omit it.

The Byzantine state in its last century had been a catastrophe to live under. Civil wars between Palaiologan claimants; the Catalan Company; the collapse of the coinage; the loss of Anatolia; tribute to the Ottomans paid by the emperors themselves; and — twice — a union with Rome forced on the population by emperors who needed a western army, enforced with imprisonment, exile and mutilation.

The Ottoman settlement was, for most Orthodox Christians in most periods, more stable than what preceded it, and the fifteenth-century Greek sources that say so were not all writing under duress. That is not an argument that conquest was good; it is an entry in a ledger that must contain both columns.

Reading the cost column against the framework

The first finding, and it explains the arrangement's longevity.

A conquest is cheap to hold in proportion to the absence of an alternative sovereign for the conquered to defect to. The Ottomans in 1453 had eliminated every such alternative — the Byzantine state, the despotates, and any western power with a stake — and the cost of holding the population accordingly approached zero.

Compare the Latin empire in the same city. The Latins of 1204 faced a Greek government in exile at Nicaea with an army and a claim, and spent fifty-seven years as a garrison. **The difference between 1204 and 1453 in the same city with the same population is entirely the presence or absence of somewhere else to be loyal to.**

The second finding, on what an administrative use does to an institution. The church was retained and made responsible for taxes, and that is where the settlement's cost to it actually fell.

An institution that is preserved for its administrative usefulness will be converted into an administrative instrument, and the conversion is invisible at the moment of the settlement — nobody in 1454 was agreeing that the patriarchate would become a tax farm. It became one because the function it was retained for was fiscal, and functions shape institutions over centuries.

A ruler who preserves a clergy in order to use it has not spared that clergy; he has repurposed it, and the repurposing is the price, payable slowly.

A note on sources.

The absence of a rival claimant after the falls of the Morea (1460) and Trebizond (1461), the fiscal disincentive to mass conversion, and the retention of the existing ecclesiastical administration, are standard.

The reconstruction of Constantinople — *sürgün* transfers, the buying-back of captives, foundations by the sultan and his viziers, and the survey of 1478 giving 16,324 households and 3,927 shops — is treated in Module 1 with its sources.

The *peşkeş* payable on patriarchal appointment, its growth over subsequent centuries and the resulting indebtedness of the patriarchate, are standard and are treated further in Module 10. The patriarchate's role in the collection and delivery of taxes from the Christian population is standard, with the caution stated in Module 2 that the system's formalisation belongs to later periods.

The *cizye*, the ordinary taxes, and the disabilities of *dhimmi* status including restrictions on church building and repair, on dress, on testimony and on arms, are standard; their enforcement varied greatly by period and region and no general characterisation is offered. **No figures are given for tax rates or yields**, because they varied and the surviving material does not support a general series.

The condition of the late Byzantine state — civil wars, the Catalan Company, monetary collapse, the loss of Anatolia, tributary status and the forced unions — is documented in the union of Lyon study in this sequence and in the standard accounts.

The propositions that a conquest's holding cost varies inversely with the availability of an alternative sovereign, and that an institution preserved for administrative usefulness is repurposed rather than spared, are this study's.

MODULE 6

THE PATRIARCH COLLECTED IT

Module 6 · extraction — a poll tax the state wanted paid rather than avoided, a hierarchy converted into its collection mechanism, and the arithmetic that made toleration profitable

The instrument

The Ottoman fiscal relation with its Christian subjects rested on the *cizye*, the poll tax payable by adult non-Muslim males, with exemptions for the poor, the aged, the disabled, women, children and the clergy, and rates graded by wealth.

Its most important property is the one that governs the whole settlement: a converted subject stops paying it.

That single fact aligned the treasury's interest with the Christian population's continued existence as Christians, and it is why the framework's usual expectation — that a conquering power will press its own religion — does not apply here.

A state that taxes a religious minority for being a minority has a fiscal interest in the minority persisting, and the Ottoman state had exactly that interest for four centuries. Conversion occurred, extensively in some regions and periods, and it was not a policy and was occasionally discouraged.

That is not toleration as a principle and this study will not dress it as one. It is toleration as a revenue structure, and the two are indistinguishable from the position of a peasant who is left alone.

Who collected it

And the mechanism is the settlement's most consequential feature.

The state made the church responsible.

Rather than assess and collect from a scattered Christian population directly, the Ottoman administration increasingly worked through the ecclesiastical hierarchy: the patriarch responsible for the total, the metropolitans for their provinces, the bishops for their dioceses, the parish clergy at the bottom. The church also levied its own dues on the same population to fund itself and to pay the sums owed for its offices.

This collection has examined that instrument repeatedly and knows what it does.

The Mughal study found *madad-i maash* grants making an interpretive class defundable and therefore compliant. The Seljuk study found *waqf* endowments making one unstarvable and therefore independent. **This is a third arrangement and it is worse for the class than either: the clergy is not funded by the state and is not endowed independently — it is funded by taxing the very population it ministers to, on the state's behalf and for its own account.**

The consequences accumulate over centuries and they are exactly what one would predict.

The hierarchy's income depends on the flock's payments, which gives every bishop a financial relation to his diocese.

The office becomes an asset with a yield, and therefore something worth buying.

And the buying requires borrowing, which is how the patriarchate came to be permanently in debt to the bankers who financed the purchase of its own offices.

What the state got

The arrangement's efficiency from the state's side was considerable and is the reason it was kept.

The Ottoman administration acquired the tax revenue of a large scattered population without building an assessment and collection apparatus for it; a single address for every question concerning the Christian community; and a hierarchy with a direct material interest in that community's obedience, since disorder threatened the collection and the collection was the hierarchy's own income.

A ruler who makes a subject community's own leadership responsible for its taxes has bought the leadership's loyalty with the community's money, and has done it without spending anything himself.

That is the cheapest form of indirect rule in this collection and the Ottoman state ran it for four hundred years.

Who paid

The Orthodox peasant paid, twice: once to the state through his church, and once to his church.

The Orthodox merchant paid, and in the later centuries a stratum of them — the Phanariots of Constantinople — did extremely well out of the arrangement, financing the patriarchate's debts, purchasing offices, and eventually supplying the Ottoman state with dragomans and the Danubian principalities with princes.

And the monasteries, which held land and were subject to the ordinary levies, and which the state periodically pressed and periodically confirmed.

Reading extraction against the framework

The first finding, and it identifies the material basis of Ottoman religious policy.

Where a state taxes a population for not sharing its religion, it acquires a fiscal interest in that population not converting, and its toleration is thereby structural rather than principled — which makes it far more reliable than principle, because interests are more durable than convictions and change only when the fiscal structure does.

That is a general proposition and it is testable: **look for the tax before crediting the toleration**, and where the tax exists, expect the toleration to last exactly as long as the revenue matters and to weaken when it does not. The nineteenth-century Ottoman reforms that abolished the *cizye* and declared legal equality are also the century in which the empire's communal relations deteriorated catastrophically, and the two are not unconnected.

The second finding, and it completes the sequence's analysis of clerical funding.

This collection has now examined four ways of funding an interpretive class and they can be ranked by what they do to its independence.

A perpetual private endowment — the *waqf* — cannot be quietly closed, and produces a class the ruler can neither buy nor starve.

A terminable state grant — *madad-i maash* — makes the class defundable and therefore compliant while the pressure lasts.

An exemption is the cheapest to grant and the dearest to reverse, and produces a class the ruler cannot easily discipline.

And a licence to tax the flock, which is what the Ottoman settlement gave the Orthodox hierarchy, produces something none of the others do: **a class that is financially independent of the ruler and financially dependent on the people it governs, and is therefore answerable to neither — because it can extract from the flock without the flock's consent and owes the ruler nothing but a delivery.**

That is the most corrupting of the four, and the module on collapse traces what it did over four hundred years.

A note on sources.

The *cizye*, its incidence on adult non-Muslim males, its exemptions and graded rates, and the fiscal disincentive to mass conversion, are standard. **No figures are given for rates or yields.**

The involvement of the ecclesiastical hierarchy in the assessment and delivery of taxes from the Christian population, and the church's own levies on the same population, are standard, with the caution given in Module 2 that the system's formalisation belongs to periods later than 1454 and that the traditional account of a comprehensive grant at the conquest is not supported by the documentary record.

The indebtedness of the patriarchate arising from payments for office, and the role of financiers in funding those payments, are standard and are treated in Module 10. The rise of the Phanariot families, their financing of the patriarchate, their supply of dragomans to the Porte and princes to the Danubian principalities, belongs to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and is referred to here only in outline.

The nineteenth-century Ottoman reforms abolishing the *cizye* and declaring legal equality are standard; the observation connecting them to the deterioration of communal relations is a reading offered here and is not developed.

The four-way ranking of clerical funding instruments draws on the Seljuk, Mughal and Sakya studies in this sequence; the identification of a licence to tax the flock as a fourth and distinct arrangement, and the assessment of its effects, are this study's.

MODULE 7

A GREEK WRITING FOR THE SULTAN

Module 7 · information and suppression — a conquest whose Greek historian worked for the conqueror, a founding charter nobody could produce, and a forger in Italy filling the gap a century later

The historian

The principal Greek narrative of the conquest and of the settlement that followed was written by **Kritovoulos of Imbros**, a Greek from an aristocratic family who took service under Mehmed II, governed Imbros for him, and composed a history of his reign **dedicated to the sultan.**

He writes in classicising Greek, casts Mehmed in the mould of Alexander, and records the conquest of his own people's capital as a great deed. He is also, on the elevation of Gennadios II to the patriarchate, **the only contemporary source there is.**

That is the case's documentary situation in one sentence. **The foundational act of the Orthodox church's position under Ottoman rule is attested by a single Greek courtier writing to please the conqueror.**

The study relies on him because there is no alternative, and says so.

The charter that was not there

And the more revealing fact is the absence, which Module 2 set out and which belongs here in its evidential form.

By the early sixteenth century the officials of the patriarchate knew that Mehmed II was supposed to have granted the Great Church a set of privileges at the conquest, and they **could not produce a document**. They needed one — successive sultans had to be shown what had been granted — and the archive had nothing, whether through the fires that repeatedly struck the patriarchate, through deliberate destruction, or because the grant had never existed in that form.

So the account was supplied. The elaborate description of Gennadios's enthronement and of the privileges conferred appears in the *Chronicon Maius*, long

attributed to George Sphrantzes, who had been Constantine XI's own *protovestiarios* and an eyewitness to the fall.

The *Chronicon Maius* is a composition of about 1580 by Makarios Melissenos, working in Italy, and Melissenos is a known forger.

What that means

Set the two halves together and the pattern is exact.

An institution held a position it had built up by practice, needed a founding grant to defend it, had no such grant, and acquired one — attributed to an eyewitness, dated to the dramatic moment, and composed a century and a quarter later by a man in another country.

This collection has seen that operation before and named it. The **Donation of Constantine** was an eighth-century forgery recording a fourth-century grant, which secured the papacy's temporal position for six hundred years and was exposed by Lorenzo Valla in 1440 — thirteen years before the conquest, and by philological methods of exactly the kind that would later expose Melissenos.

Two churches, at opposite ends of Christendom, each manufactured a founding donation because each held a position built by accumulation and needed one built by grant.

And the reason is structural rather than a matter of dishonesty. **A position derived from a founding act can be defended by producing the act. A position derived from accumulated custom can only be defended by demonstrating the custom, which requires archives, continuity and a sympathetic hearing — none of which a subject church negotiating with a sultan in 1520 possessed.**

The Ottoman side of the record

Against the Greek material stands the Ottoman administrative record, and it has the opposite bias and the opposite strength.

The Ottoman state kept registers: cadastral surveys, tax rolls, the *berat*s issued to officeholders, the *mühimme* registers of imperial decisions. That material is enormous, largely survives, and is uninterested in the questions this study asks — it records what was assessed, who was appointed, and what was decreed, and it does not explain what anyone thought they were doing.

So the case is documented by a Greek courtier's panegyric on one side and a fiscal archive on the other, with a forged founding charter in the middle, and the

study has worked between them.

What was suppressed

Very little, in the doctrinal sense, and Module 3 explains why: a sovereign who requires nothing of a religion has nothing to police in it.

What the Ottoman state did suppress was **political** and it did so effectively: rebellion, and any association between its Christian subjects and external Christian powers. Correspondence with Rome, Venice or Spain was a serious matter; conspiracy was punished as conspiracy anywhere is; and patriarchs were deposed, exiled and — in later centuries, most notoriously Gregory V in 1821 — executed, for political reasons.

Not one of those was a doctrinal proceeding. No Orthodox Christian in the Ottoman empire was ever punished by the Ottoman state for holding an Orthodox belief, because the state had no position on Orthodox beliefs.

And the boundary is exactly where Module 3 predicted: the sovereign controlled the officer and ignored the doctrine.

Reading the seam against the framework

The first finding, on forged foundations. This collection can now state a proposition with two independent instances, at opposite ends of a divided Christendom, five hundred years apart.

An institution whose position was built by accumulation will, when required to justify it to a sovereign, produce a founding grant it does not have — and the manufactured grant will be attributed to an eyewitness, dated to a dramatic moment of origin, and composed at the time of the need rather than the time of the event.

The diagnostic follows and is easy to apply: **where a foundational charter is famous, dramatic and unproducible, look at when the institution needed it rather than when it says it was given.** The Donation of Constantine dates to the eighth-century Frankish negotiation, not to Constantine. The Donation of Mehmet dates to the sixteenth-century patriarchate's need to show a sultan what it held, not to 1454.

The second finding, on the shape of this particular archive. The Greek account of the conquest's settlement was written by a man in the conqueror's service; the Ottoman account is a fiscal register; and the connecting document is a forgery.

Where a conquered institution's own record is destroyed and its conqueror's record is administrative, the history of the settlement will be written from the

losers' later reconstructions — which are shaped by the needs of the moment of reconstruction, and which is why the traditional account of 1453 describes a comprehensive charter granted in a single generous act, and the documentary record describes an arrangement that grew.

A note on sources.

Kritovoulos of Imbros, his service under Mehmed II, his governorship of Imbros, his classicising history dedicated to the sultan, and his status as the only contemporary source for Gennadios II's elevation, are standard and are noted in the review literature on Papademetriou's *Render unto the Sultan*.

The inability of early-sixteenth-century patriarchal officials to produce documentary evidence of privileges granted at the conquest, and the attribution of that lack to fires at the patriarchate, individual acts of destruction and displacements of the patriarchal church, follow the scholarship on the patriarchal chronicles. **The *Chronicon Maius* as a composition of about 1580 by Makarios Melissenos, formerly attributed to George Sphrantzes, is the established position** and the text is not relied on here.

The Donation of Constantine and Lorenzo Valla's demonstration of 1440 are treated in the East–West Schism study in this sequence.

The character of the Ottoman administrative archive — cadastral surveys, tax registers, *berat*s and *mühimme* registers — is standard and is described in outline only.

The Ottoman suppression of political association between Christian subjects and foreign powers, the deposition and exile of patriarchs on political grounds, and the execution of Gregory V in 1821, are standard; the last belongs to the Greek revolution and is referred to here only as an instance of the political rather than doctrinal character of such proceedings.

The proposition that an institution whose position was built by accumulation will manufacture a founding grant when required to justify it, and the diagnostic derived from it, are this study's, and rest on the two instances named.

MODULE 8

THE SULTAN APPOINTED HIM

Module 8 · elite coordination and the default — a church whose head was chosen by a Muslim sovereign, an arrangement that was never a crisis, and the reason nothing about it required a doctrine

The mechanism

The most remarkable thing about the appointment of the patriarch of Constantinople by the Ottoman sultan is that it produced no constitutional crisis of any kind.

Set that against what this sequence has examined. The question of who appoints a bishop produced, in Latin Christendom, a fifty-year war, two antipopes, two anti-kings, the sack of Rome and a pope dead in exile. It produced the *Dictatus papae*, the doctrine of papal supremacy, the conciliar movement, canon law as a systematic science, and — eventually — the constitutional vocabulary of Europe.

In the Ottoman east the same question was settled without an argument, because it had been settled a thousand years earlier and the conquest changed only the identity of the appointing hand.

The synod elected; the sultan confirmed; a *berat* was issued defining the appointee's rights and duties; and the patriarch was enthroned. The sultan could and did depose. Nobody wrote a treatise about it.

Why there was no Investiture Contest

The reason is the one the Landscape established and it is worth stating as a general proposition because it explains a great deal beyond this case.

An institution resists a change in who appoints it only if it holds a doctrine under which appointment matters.

The Latin church had developed exactly such a doctrine, and the Investiture study traced why: **the Latin credential was institutional**, conferred by an office in a hierarchy, and therefore capturable — which made control of the appointing power the central prize and worth fighting for.

The eastern church's credential was equally institutional, and it had never developed the doctrine, because **the appointing power had never been in play.** From Constantine onward the emperor appointed. There was no period in which the eastern church had held the appointment and lost it, and therefore no memory of a right infringed, no body of argument constructed to defend it, and no vocabulary in which to object.

A right that was never held is not a right that can be lost, and the eastern church in 1454 did not experience the sultan's appointment as an usurpation because there was no prior condition for it to be a departure from.

What the arrangement actually solved

And from the sultan's side the arrangement solved the coordination problem this collection has found at the centre of every case.

He needed one address. A scattered Christian population, in dozens of provinces, speaking several languages, with local hierarchies and monasteries and disputes, is administratively intractable unless somebody can be held responsible for it. The patriarchate supplied that: a single officeholder, appointed by the sultan, answerable to the sultan, through whom every question concerning the community could be routed.

And the patriarch's authority over that community rested on something the sultan did not have to supply — the ecclesiastical legitimacy of an office eleven hundred years old, conferred by consecration in an unbroken chain, recognised by every Orthodox Christian in the empire.

The sultan appointed a man whose authority came from somewhere else, and thereby obtained an administrator he did not have to make credible.

That is the elegance of the arrangement and it is why it lasted. The framework has spent nine studies on the proposition that authority cannot be self-conferred. **Here a ruler obtained the benefit of that proposition without paying for it: he took over the appointment to an office whose authority was already established and did not depend on him.**

Where it went wrong

And it went wrong in exactly the place the mechanism predicts, over centuries rather than years.

The office was appointed by the sultan and paid for on appointment. Both of those were tolerable in 1454. Together, over time, they produced the pathology.

If the office is in the sultan's gift, and if a payment is made on appointment, then **the office is for sale**; and if it is for sale, then a candidate who offers more can displace an incumbent; and if incumbents can be displaced by higher bids, then **the price rises and the tenure shortens**.

That is exactly what happened. By the seventeenth century the patriarchal throne changed hands with extraordinary frequency, sometimes several times in a year, with the same men returning repeatedly as their factions raised the money; the patriarchate carried permanent and growing debt; and the financiers who funded the purchases acquired a standing influence over the church.

The Ottoman state did not design this and did not particularly want it — an unstable patriarchate is a worse administrative instrument than a stable one. It emerged from the interaction of two features that were each individually reasonable.

The default

So what was the default state of the arrangement when nobody was enforcing?

Stability, for a very long time, and then a market.

Nothing in the settlement collapsed. The Orthodox church of the Ottoman empire never fragmented, never lost its orders, never suffered a schism of the western kind, and emerged in the nineteenth century intact enough to supply the new Balkan nation-states with national churches.

And its head's office had become a commodity, which is a different kind of failure from any this collection has examined and belongs to the module on collapse.

Reading the default against the framework

The first finding, and it answers a question the Investiture study raised.

That study established that the Latin credential was capturable and that the capture was therefore worth a fifty-year war. **This case shows the same credential structure with the capture already complete and uncontested, and the result is that nothing happens.**

An institutional credential's capturability generates conflict only where the capture is contested. Where the appointing power has been held by the sovereign since the institution's foundation, the same structure produces no doctrine of resistance, no constitutional literature and no war — because the argument requires a prior condition to appeal to and there is none.

That has a wide application. **Look for constitutional doctrine where a right has been recently infringed, and not where it has never existed**, and expect two institutions of identical structure to produce entirely different political theory according to whether they can remember holding what they are being asked to give up.

The second finding, on the interaction that ruined the office.

The sultan's appointment power was sustainable. The payment on appointment was sustainable. **Together they made the office a purchasable asset**, and a purchasable asset in the gift of a sovereign who is indifferent to its holder will be traded, and the trading will destroy it.

Where an office is both in a superior's gift and purchasable, its tenure will shorten and its price will rise without limit, because each incumbent's insecurity increases the value of displacing him and the cost of retaining him. That is a mechanism with no natural floor, and the Ottoman patriarchate is one of the clearest historical instances of it.

A note on sources.

The procedure of synodal election followed by imperial confirmation and the issue of a *berat*, and the sultan's power to depose, are standard, with the caution given in Module 2 concerning the formalisation of the system after 1454.

The Byzantine imperial appointment of patriarchs from the fourth century is documented in the East–West Schism study in this sequence, as is the absence of an eastern investiture controversy; the Latin material is documented in the Investiture Contest study.

The *peşkeş* payable on appointment, the frequency of patriarchal turnover in the seventeenth century with the same individuals returning repeatedly, the accumulated debt of the patriarchate, and the influence of its financiers, are standard. **No figures are given for the sums involved or the number of tenures**, because the reported figures vary and the practice changed over time.

The survival of the Orthodox church intact through the Ottoman centuries and its supply of national churches to the Balkan states is standard and is treated in Module 10.

The propositions that an institutional credential's capturability generates conflict only where the capture is contested, and that an office both in a superior's gift and purchasable will suffer shortening tenure and rising price without limit, are this study's.

MODULE 9

THE MOUNTAIN KEPT ITS CHARTERS

Module 9 · plurality or foreclosure — what the conquered retained, why the monasteries survived a Muslim sovereign better than a Christian one, and the line below which none of it reached

What was retained

Inventory what the Orthodox community held after 1453 that a ruler could not take, and the list is longer than the conquest's reputation suggests.

Its doctrine, entirely, for the reason Module 3 established: the sovereign had no use for it and therefore no view about it.

Its liturgy and calendar, unaltered, including the annual recitation of the anathemas.

Its orders. Bishops were consecrated by bishops in an unbroken chain, and the Ottoman state neither could nor wished to interfere in the act. **The sultan appointed the man; the church made him a bishop**, and those are different operations.

Its courts, for the internal affairs of its own community.

Its monasteries. Athos had submitted to the Ottomans before the conquest — the Holy Mountain's communities had made terms in the late fourteenth century — and received confirmations of their status and properties from successive sultans. They kept their charters, their lands in substantial part, their self-government and their libraries.

And its property, in part, subject to the ordinary levies and to periodic pressures and confiscations.

Why the monasteries did better under a sultan

And here the case delivers a result that reads as perverse and is a straightforward consequence of the position.

The Byzantine emperors had been the monasteries' greatest threat.

The eastern emperors legislated repeatedly from the tenth century against monastic accumulation of land, because the monastic estates were exempt and their growth was eating the tax base — the problem the Sakya study examined in the Yuan and this collection has found wherever a religious establishment holds land inside a state that needs revenue.

The Ottoman state had a different relation to the same estates, because the monasteries were not exempt in the same way: they were Christian institutions in a Muslim state, subject to the levies applicable to *dhimmi* property, and therefore **a source of revenue rather than a hole in it.**

A monastery that is exempt is a fiscal problem to a co-religionist sovereign and a taxable asset to a sovereign of another faith, and the two produce opposite policies toward exactly the same institution.

Add the doctrinal point from Module 3. Under the emperors, Athos had been the centre of resistance to the unions of 1274 and 1439 and had been persecuted for it by Michael VIII. Under the sultans there was no union to resist and no emperor to resist it.

The Holy Mountain was safer from a Muslim conqueror than it had been from an Orthodox emperor, on both counts, and it is still there.

The counterweights, and their limits

Grade what recourse was available and to whom.

A monk held the strongest position, for the reason this sequence has now established twice: an institution of voluntary poverty is coercion-proof in both directions, its members having renounced what could buy or threaten them. And under a sovereign with no doctrinal interest, there was nothing for them to refuse.

A bishop held an office in the sultan's gift and was correspondingly exposed — and this is where the settlement's cost fell hardest, because the hierarchy was the part of the church the state actually engaged with.

A merchant could prosper, and by the seventeenth century a Greek commercial and financial class in Constantinople had become indispensable to the state and extremely influential in the church.

A community could take its disputes to its own courts or to the *qadi*'s, and Christians used both, choosing according to advantage — which is a genuine and underrated liberty, and one the framework should note: **a subject who can choose between two legal systems has a leverage over both that a subject with one does not.**

And a peasant could do what he had always done, which was pay, and be left alone in his religion, and send a son when the levy came.

What was foreclosed

Against that, the list of what was closed is short and heavy.

Arms. The Christian population was, in principle and largely in practice, disarmed.

Office. The high offices of the empire were closed to a Christian who remained one — and open, spectacularly, to one who did not, which is what the *devşirme* was.

Testimony, in the ordinary case, against a Muslim.

And the possibility of a Christian sovereign, which is the largest item and the one that made everything else stable: there was nowhere to defect to, and therefore nothing to organise around, and therefore four centuries of quiet.

Reading liberty against the framework

The first finding, and it identifies a seventh generator of plurality for this collection's list.

Earlier studies found counterweights arising from the technical form of institutions, from competitive bidding between authorities, from confessionally shaped instruments, from a plural patron, from an amnesty, from a change in an assembly's unit of account, and from institutions of voluntary poverty.

This case adds: **counterweights arising from the sovereign's indifference.**

Its signature is unmistakable and its weakness is equally so. **It protects everything the sovereign has no use for and nothing he does.** Orthodox doctrine, liturgy, monastic life and internal jurisdiction were untouched for four centuries. Orthodox access to arms, office and political association was closed for the same four centuries. **The line between the two is drawn exactly at the sovereign's interest**, and the protected zone is wide precisely because that interest is narrow.

And it is not a right. It can be withdrawn without notice and without breach, because nothing was ever granted — the community's freedom consisted in nobody's wanting to interfere, and a change of policy requires no revocation.

The second finding, on exemption and taxation. The monasteries were threatened by the emperors who exempted them and safe under the sultans who taxed them.

A religious institution's security depends less on whether it is favoured than on whether it is fiscally anomalous, and an exempt institution inside a state that needs revenue is a standing target however much the ruler shares its faith, while a taxed institution is a revenue source however little he does.

That inverts the intuitive expectation completely and this collection should carry it: **look at the tax status before the confession**, because a sovereign's relation to an institution is set by what it does to his accounts more reliably than by what he believes.

A note on sources.

The retention of Orthodox doctrine, liturgy, orders and internal jurisdiction after 1453 is treated in Modules 3 and 4. The submission of the Athonite communities to the Ottomans in the late fourteenth century and their confirmations by successive sultans are standard.

The Byzantine imperial legislation against monastic accumulation from the tenth century is treated in the East–West Schism study in this sequence; the persecution of Athos by Michael VIII is treated in the union of Lyon study.

The disabilities of *dhimmi* status — disarmament, exclusion from high office, restrictions on testimony — are treated in Module 5 with the same caution that their enforcement varied by period and region. The *devşirme* is treated in Module 4. The concurrent use of ecclesiastical and *qadi* courts by Christian litigants is standard.

The rise of the Greek commercial and financial class of Constantinople is treated in Modules 6 and 10.

The characterisation of monasticism as coercion-proof draws on the East–West Schism and union of Lyon studies in this sequence.

The identification of sovereign indifference as a distinct generator of plurality, and the proposition that a religious institution's security depends on its fiscal status rather than on the sovereign's confession, are this study's.

MODULE 10

THE OFFICE BECAME A COMMODITY

Module 10 · change and collapse — an arrangement that lasted four hundred and sixty-nine years, the two features that slowly ruined its central office, and the nationalism that finally dissolved it

The long stability

The settlement of 1454 outlasted every arrangement examined in this sequence.

The Seljuk sultanate lasted a century and a half from Baghdad. The Latin empire of Constantinople lasted fifty-seven years. The union of Lyon lasted seven. The papal monarchy in its high medieval form ran about three centuries before the schism of 1378.

The Ottoman settlement with the Orthodox church ran from 1454 to 1923.

Through it, the church did not fragment, did not lose its orders, did not suffer a schism, and did not lose its doctrine. It emerged in the nineteenth century intact enough to supply national churches to Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria as those states appeared.

That is the most durable arrangement in this collection and its durability requires explanation, which the preceding modules have supplied: nothing about it was contested, nobody had anything to gain by breaking it, and the sovereign wanted only what it was giving him.

The slow ruin of the office

And inside that stability, one thing decayed continuously, by the mechanism Module 8 identified.

The office of patriarch was in the sultan's gift and was paid for on appointment. Those two features together made it a purchasable asset, and a purchasable asset in the gift of an indifferent sovereign is traded.

The consequences over the following centuries are the darkest part of the case.

Tenure collapsed. By the seventeenth century patriarchs were deposed and restored repeatedly; individuals held the throne three, four and five separate times as their factions raised money and their rivals raised more.

The price rose, because each displacement demonstrated that the office could be bought and raised what an incumbent would pay to keep it.

The debt became permanent. The sums were borrowed, principally from the Greek financial class of the Phanar, and the patriarchate carried debt continuously.

And the financiers acquired the church. A hierarchy in permanent debt to a lay commercial class is a hierarchy that class controls, and the Phanariots' rise to their eighteenth-century position — dragomans of the Porte, princes of Moldavia and Wallachia, financiers of the patriarchate — runs directly through that dependence.

The church that kept its doctrine intact for four centuries lost its own government to its creditors, and the Ottoman state neither designed that nor especially wanted it.

The one thing that finally broke it

And the settlement was dissolved, in the end, by something none of the parties to it had anticipated and against which it had no defence.

Nationalism.

The Ottoman arrangement was organised around **confession**: a Christian population, of whatever language or origin, under a Christian hierarchy, taxed as non-Muslims and administered as a body. That works so long as the population's primary self-identification is religious.

In the nineteenth century it ceased to be. Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians and Romanians came to understand themselves as nations rather than as Orthodox subjects, and the arrangement had no category for that.

The consequences ran in both directions and destroyed the settlement from both ends.

The Christian populations demanded national states, and got them, beginning with the Greek revolution from 1821 — in the course of which the Ottoman state hanged the patriarch Gregory V, on political grounds, at the gate of the patriarchate, for a rising he had condemned.

And the national churches broke the patriarchate's authority. The Bulgarian Exarchate of 1870 and its condemnation by Constantinople as *phyletism* — the heresy of organising the church by nationality — is the arrangement's internal collapse: **the church that had held the Orthodox of the empire together as one body was told**

by its own members that the body was several.

A settlement organised around a category becomes unworkable when the population stops using the category, and no amount of good administration can prevent it, because the category was the thing being administered.

Reading the collapse against the framework

The first finding, on what durability actually rests on.

The Ottoman-Orthodox settlement lasted longer than anything else in this sequence, and the reason is not that it was wisely designed. **It is that nobody had an interest in ending it.**

The sultan got taxes and order. The hierarchy got office, income and freedom from doctrinal interference. The population got its religion and paid for it. The west had nothing at stake. **There was no party to the arrangement whose position would have improved by breaking it**, and that — rather than any virtue in its terms — is what four centuries of stability consists of.

Arrangements last in proportion to the number of parties who would gain by ending them, and this one had none until the nineteenth century produced a party that did not exist when it was made.

The second finding, and it is the mechanism that ruined the office.

The patriarchate's decay was not caused by Ottoman malice, Christian weakness or anybody's decision. **It was produced by the interaction of two individually reasonable features — appointment in the sovereign's gift, and payment on appointment — which together made an office into a commodity.**

Where a position is both allocable by a superior and purchasable, it will be sold; where it is sold, tenure shortens; where tenure shortens, price rises; and where price rises, the holder is captured by whoever finances the purchase. That is a closed loop with no natural limit and it destroys the office's independence completely, without anybody intending it, over generations.

The study offers it as a general mechanism, because the two features are common and their combination is not usually recognised as dangerous.

And the third, on categories. The settlement was built on the category *Christian* and was dissolved when the populations reorganised themselves around the category *nation*.

A settlement is only as durable as the category it administers, and categories are not permanent — they are themselves formed, by exactly the processes this collection examines under formation, and they change when the formation changes. The Ottoman arrangement was undone in the nineteenth century by schools, printing,

vernacular literature and the historical imagination, which is to say by a re-formation of the population that no party to the original settlement could have anticipated or prevented.

A note on sources.

The duration of the Ottoman-Orthodox arrangement from 1454 to the end of the empire, and the church's survival with its doctrine and orders intact, are standard.

The seventeenth-century instability of the patriarchal throne, the repeated depositions and restorations of individuals, the growth of the payment on appointment, the patriarchate's permanent indebtedness and the influence of its Phanariot financiers, are standard; **no figures are given** for sums or for the number of tenures, as the reported figures vary.

The Greek revolution from 1821 and the execution of Patriarch Gregory V are standard. The Bulgarian Exarchate of 1870 and its condemnation by the Council of Constantinople of 1872 as *phyletism* are standard. The emergence of national churches in Greece, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria is standard and is referred to in outline.

The propositions that arrangements last in proportion to the absence of parties who would gain by ending them, that an office both allocable and purchasable enters a closed loop of shortening tenure and rising price, and that a settlement is only as durable as the category it administers, are this study's.

MODULE 11

WHAT ENDED AND WHAT DID NOT

Module 11 · the grim accounting — the fall of a state that had existed for eleven hundred years, the survival of the church it had ruled, and a ledger in which the two do not belong to the same party

The first column

Set down what the settlement produced.

A functioning capital. Constantinople in 1450 was a shell holding perhaps fifty thousand people inside walls built for ten times that. By 1478, after twenty-five years of deliberate reconstruction, the city and Galata held 16,324 households and 3,927 shops, and it went on to become the largest city in Europe.

Four and a half centuries of religious stability for the Orthodox population: doctrine untouched, liturgy unaltered, orders unbroken, monasteries confirmed, and no sovereign with an interest in changing any of it.

The end of the forced unions. The population that had emptied Hagia Sophia in December 1452 rather than accept the union of Florence was never asked again.

And an administrative settlement of genuine efficiency, which gave a scattered minority self-government in its own affairs at a cost the state could bear and the community could survive.

The second column

The sack of May 1453, with the enslavement of a large part of the population, and the losses of the siege.

The end of the Roman state, which had existed continuously since 27 BC in one form or another and in Constantinople since 330. Whatever one thinks of its last century, an institution of that antiquity ended in three days.

The devşirme, and the children.

The disabilities — arms, office, testimony, church repair — inconsistently enforced across four centuries and real wherever they were.

The subordination of the hierarchy, which was made a fiscal instrument and ended as a commodity in a market run by its creditors.

And the thinning of Greek learning, which lost the court, the aristocracy and the patronage that had sustained it, and did not recover its former range for centuries.

The two columns belong to different parties

And this case has a feature that makes its accounting unusually clear, and it is the feature the user of this framework will recognise immediately.

The state died and the church did not.

Those were not the same party and had not been for a long time. The Byzantine state's last two centuries had been, for the Orthodox church, a period of forced unions, deposed patriarchs, persecuted monks and imperial doctrinal interference — the record set out in the union of Lyon study. **The state's death removed the party that had been doing that.**

So the ledger does not net because the columns are not the same entity's. **1453 is a catastrophe for the Roman state, a disaster for the population of the city in that year, and — over the following centuries and on the evidence — a survivable and in some respects improved position for the institution the state had been ruling.**

That is why Greek accounts of the period differ so violently among themselves. **The lament for the city and the assessment of the church's position are answers to two different questions**, and both are honest.

The shape of the record

Module 7 sets it out: a Greek historian in the conqueror's service, an Ottoman fiscal archive, and a forged founding charter composed in Italy in 1580.

What none of them contains is the ordinary Orthodox subject of the following four centuries — the Anatolian villager, the Balkan peasant, the family that lost a son to the levy. **The most numerous party to the settlement appears in the record as a tax assessment and a levy quota**, which is the bias this collection has found in every case and finds here in its purest form, because the Ottoman archive is a fiscal archive and fiscal archives record people as sums.

Reading the accounting against the framework

The first finding, and it is a correction to how this collection has been doing its accounting.

Every previous study has assumed that a conquest's costs and benefits can be assigned to the conquering and conquered orders. **This case shows that the conquered order may itself be two parties with divergent interests, and that a conquest can destroy one while relieving the other.**

Where a state and a church have been in conflict, the state's destruction by a third party is not a single event with a single sign — it is a catastrophe for one and a liberation from a particular pressure for the other, and any account that assigns it a single valuation has collapsed two parties into one.

The general test: **before scoring a conquest, ask whether the conquered order was internally at war**, and if it was, score the parties separately.

The second finding, on what actually ended in 1453.

The Roman state ended. The Orthodox church did not, and neither did the population, the language, the liturgy or the calendar.

A conquest ends what it destroys and not what it acquires, and the Ottomans destroyed a state and acquired a population, a city and an administrative problem. The population they acquired is still identifiable; the state they destroyed is not.

That distinction is worth carrying because histories of conquest routinely treat the extinction of a state as the extinction of everything under it, and this case is a five-hundred-year demonstration that it is not.

A note on sources.

The population of Constantinople before the siege is variously estimated and **no figure is asserted here beyond the observation that the city was far below its walls' capacity**; the survey of 1478 giving 16,324 households and 3,927 shops is as reported and is treated in Module 1.

The sack and enslavement of May 1453 are treated in Module 1. The *devşirme* is treated in Module 4, the disabilities in Module 5, the fiscal subordination and eventual commodification of the hierarchy in Modules 6, 8 and 10, and the decline of Greek learning in Module 4.

The proclamation of the union of Florence in Hagia Sophia in December 1452 and the population's refusal are treated in the East–West Schism and union of Lyon studies in this sequence.

No figures are given anywhere in this study for casualties, populations, tax yields or the numbers taken in the levy, because the surviving material does not support them.

The propositions that a conquered order may be two parties with divergent interests requiring separate scoring, and that a conquest ends what it destroys rather than what it acquires, are this study's.

MODULE 12

THE END OF ROME

Module 12 · convergence and divergence — the close of a nine-study arc, the ruler who needed no warrant, and the strongest case against the whole framework, stated fully and answered

Where the arc ends

Nine studies in this sequence have examined one problem across four civilisations and eight centuries. Force compels and cannot make obedience owed. Somewhere there must be a party who can declare that obedience is owed, and the declaration is worth having only because the ruler could not have produced it.

The catalogue of failure modes now runs: **capture, compulsion, purchase, starvation, hollowing, expenditure, forking, divorce, revocation.**

And the catalogue of credential locations: **in an office, in a person, in a family, in a state grant, in a claim of direct revelation.**

This case adds the term the sequence had not met: a claim that requires no issuer at all.

Mehmed II took Constantinople and was Caesar of Rome because he held the city. George of Trebizond, a Greek, wrote it out for him in 1466: he who holds the centre of the empire is emperor, and the centre of the Roman empire is Constantinople. No grant, no ceremony, no issuer, no consent.

That claim cannot be captured, compelled, purchased, starved, hollowed, expended, forked, divorced or revoked, because every one of those failures operates on an issuer and there is no issuer. It is the most robust authorisation in this collection, and it purchases exactly one thing: the assent of people already disposed to give it.

Which was enough, because Mehmed needed nothing from anybody who disputed it.

The mirror of the whole sequence

And that is what closes the arc, because it reverses every case before it.

Tughril needed a caliph because a Turkish nomad ruling Persians and Arabs required a form of words that would travel where his cavalry could not.

Henry IV needed a pope because his bishops held a third of Germany and their obedience ran through Rome.

Michael VIII needed a pope because the legality of an invasion he could not resist was decided in Italy.

Charles VII needed an anointing because a rival held the better treaty and the better army.

Akbar needed a signature because the law he administered had no tie-breaker.

In every case the need arose from a gap between what the ruler held and what he had to justify, and the gap was filled by going to somebody who could refuse.

Mehmed had no gap. His soldiers believed what he believed; his administrators served a sovereign whose legitimacy their own tradition supplied; his new Christian subjects had no alternative to defect to and no doctrine requiring them to have one; and the western princes who rejected his Roman title had nothing he needed.

A ruler needs an authorisation exactly to the extent that some party whose cooperation he requires would otherwise withhold it, and Mehmed required nothing from any such party. That is the sequence's proposition stated in its complete form, and this case is where it becomes visible, because it is the only case in which the quantity is zero.

And therefore the church was left alone

Which produces the second closing finding and it is the one that answers the question this Christendom arc was following.

The arc began with a bishop of Rome and an emperor of Constantinople who authorised nothing for each other and drifted apart at no cost, permanently. It ran through a fifty-year war over who appoints bishops; a forked papacy that destroyed its own instrument; an emperor who bought a papal warrant with his church and had it cancelled; and a claimant who obtained the only unbuyable authorisation available and let its author burn.

It ends with a conqueror who wanted none of it.

A ruler intervenes in a religion in proportion to his dependence on it. Byzantine emperors drew their legitimacy from Orthodoxy and therefore meddled with Orthodoxy for eleven hundred years — iconoclasm, depositions, forced unions, persecutions. **The sultan drew his from elsewhere and left it entirely alone**, and the Orthodox church's doctrine was more secure under him than it had ever been under a

Christian emperor.

That is not a defence of conquest and it is not an argument that the Ottomans were tolerant in any sense that would satisfy a modern reader. **It is a statement about position.** The church was safe because it was useless to its sovereign for the one purpose that had always made sovereigns dangerous to it.

The strongest case against the framework

And since this closes the arc, the counter-position should be aimed at the framework itself rather than at any party in the case.

You have written nine studies proposing that rulers need an authorisation they cannot manufacture, and that the whole structure of religious politics follows from the properties of the issuer. And you have just examined a ruler who needed none, took the greatest city in Christendom, ruled for four and a half centuries, and produced the most stable settlement in your collection.

If the framework's central mechanism can simply be absent, and its absence produces the best outcome you have described, then the mechanism is not a law of political life. It is a description of a particular predicament — a ruler whose subjects share a doctrine he must borrow — and it does not generalise. Where a conqueror is foreign in religion, self-sufficient in legitimation and interested only in revenue, none of your machinery engages, and the resulting order is cheaper and more durable than any of the ones you have spent nine studies analysing.

Perhaps the entire sequence has been an examination of a special case: Christendom and Islam quarrelling internally over an instrument that only matters when both parties want the same one.

The answer

That is a serious objection and most of it is correct.

Conceded: the mechanism can be absent. Mehmed did not enter the authorisation market, and the framework's account of issuers and their properties simply does not engage with his position. A study that insisted on finding a purchased warrant here would be forcing the case.

Conceded: the resulting order was cheaper and more durable. Four hundred and sixty-nine years, and every case in this sequence that involved a purchased warrant was shorter and more expensive.

But the objection mistakes the framework's claim. The framework does not hold that every ruler must buy an authorisation. It holds that **an authorisation's value derives from the issuer's ability to refuse**, and that everything about such instruments follows from that property. The case where the quantity is zero is not a counter-example to a theory of prices; it is the point on the curve where nothing is purchased, and its existence is what makes the rest of the curve meaningful.

And the conditions under which the quantity is zero are extremely restrictive, which is why this is the only instance in nine studies. Mehmed required no authorisation because his own tradition supplied one requiring no issuer, because his subjects had no alternative sovereign, because his neighbours had nothing at stake, and because his fiscal interest ran against changing anybody's religion. **Remove any one of those and he is back in the market.**

The proof is what happened when the conditions changed. **When the Ottoman empire's Christian subjects acquired an alternative — the nation-state, and the great powers behind it — the arrangement collapsed within a century**, and the nineteenth-century Ottoman state spent that century desperately manufacturing legitimating instruments it had never previously needed: constitutional reform, declared equality, and eventually a reactivated caliphate.

A ruler who needs no authorisation is a ruler with no party whose cooperation is in doubt, and that is a condition, not a permanent state.

Now the concession, and it should close the sequence.

The nine studies have been an examination of what men do when they hold power and cannot make it lawful by holding it. That predicament produced the caliphal investiture, the papal monarchy, the Investiture Contest, the conciliar movement, the *maḥẓar*, the priest-patron formula and the anointing at Reims — which is to say, most of the constitutional apparatus of four civilisations.

And this last case shows what the predicament costs by showing an order that did not have it. The Ottoman settlement was cheaper, more stable and less bloody than any of the arrangements this sequence has examined, and it produced no *Dictatus papae*, no conciliar theory, no Poitiers commission and no doctrine of anything.

The predicament is expensive and it is what generates political thought. A ruler who can simply hold the city and be Caesar has no reason to argue, and a civilisation in which nobody has to argue does not develop the apparatus of argument.

Which is the last thing the sequence has to say. The instruments this collection has spent nine studies describing — the investiture, the anointing, the attestation, the council, the appeal — were built by men who needed something they could not take, from people who could refuse. They are expensive, they fail in nine catalogued ways,

and they are the reason that in some places a ruler has to explain himself.

Mehmed II did not have to explain himself to anybody, and the arrangement he built lasted longer than any of them.

Both of those are true, and this study will not tell the reader which to weigh more heavily, because the two are not paid for by the same people.

A note on sources.

The comparisons in this module rest on the eight preceding studies in this sequence, where the material is documented.

George of Trebizond's formulation of 1466 is quoted in Module 3 with its caution. Mehmed's four warrants and the absence of any authorisation sought from the patriarchate are treated in Module 3.

The nineteenth-century Ottoman constitutional reforms, the declaration of legal equality, the abolition of the *cizye* and the later reactivation of the caliphal claim are standard and are referred to in outline only; the connection drawn between them and the loss of the conditions described here is this study's.

The counter-position is composed, not quoted. It is an objection to the framework rather than a defence of any party, constructed to state the strongest available case against the sequence's central mechanism, and it is answered point by point.

This study takes no position on the theological questions at issue between Islam and Orthodox Christianity, or between Rome and Constantinople. Its analysis is structural throughout.

The proposition that a ruler needs an authorisation in proportion to the existence of a party whose required cooperation would otherwise be withheld — and that this case is the sequence's zero point rather than its refutation — is this study's, and closes the argument begun nine studies ago.

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